

Open Enrollment Starts Today for Medicare

Seniors can change their plans for 2013 from October 15 through December 7, 2012

UTICA, N.Y. – U.S. Rep. Richard Hanna today announced that Medicare Open Enrollment begins today and runs through the first week of December.

Senior citizens enrolled in Medicare are able to look at their plans during this time and make changes that could lower costs or offer more benefits. Now is the time for seniors to review the cost and coverage for 2013. Whether seniors choose Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage plan - take advantage of Open Enrollment to review cost, coverage, or both for next year (2013).

The Medicare Part B premium information for 2013 is not yet available, but seniors should call the 24-hour toll free hotline for the most up-to-date information.

"Seniors don't have to make these decisions alone because there is help out there and a toll free number they can call to discuss their options," Rep. Hanna said. "It's worth it to take a look and see if there are ways to get better benefits or lower your costs. People can call our office or their local Office of the Aging to find assistance."

Medicare is available to help answer questions:

- Visit www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan to compare your current coverage with all of the options that are available in your area, and enroll in a new plan if you decide to make a change.

- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) 24-hours a day/7 days a week to find out more about your coverage options. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Review the Medicare & You 2013 handbook. It is mailed to people with Medicare in September.
- If you have limited income and resources, you may be able to get Extra Help paying your prescription drug coverage costs. For more information, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/i1020 or call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213. TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778.
- Get one-on-one help from your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP).